

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 2-5, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 18 are presented for consideration. Claims 2, 3, and 18 are independent. Claims 2 and 3 have been amended to place them in better form. Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 13-17 and 19-26 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to file a continuing application directed to the subject matter of these canceled claims. No new matter has been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 2-5, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 18 have been allowed over the art of record, and that claims 6, 9 and 10 have been indicated as containing allowable subject and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the recitations of their base and intervening claims.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

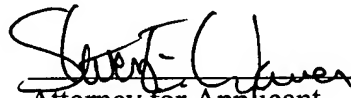
Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 14-17, 20, 21 and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,196,745 to Trumper. Claims 13, 19, 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Trumper patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,266,133 to Miyajima et al. Applicant submits that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach many features of the present invention, as previously recited in these claims. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Nevertheless, as discussed above, to expedite allowance of this application, Applicant has canceled claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 13-17 and 19-26 without prejudice or disclaimer. All pending claims being in allowable form, Applicant submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant requests favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance.

Applicant also requests that the Examiner contact his undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of this application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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